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MEDIAEVAL BUILDERS



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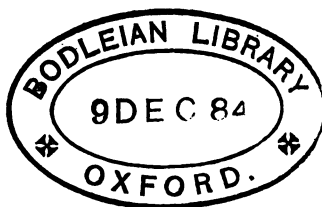
A CRITICAL INQUIRY
INTO THE
CONDITION OF THE CONVENTUAL BUILDERS
AND THEIR RELATIONS TO
SECULAR GUILDS IN THE MIDDLE AGES.

BY
GEORGE F. FORT,
AUTHOR OF "THE EARLY HISTORY AND ANTIQUITIES OF
FREEMASONRY," ETC.

"Nec Jovis ira, nec ignis,
Nec poterit ferrum, nec edax abolere vetustas."

J. W. BOUTON,
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A CRITICAL INQUIRY

CONCERNING THE

MEDIAEVAL CONVENTUAL BUILDERS.

THE mediæval monasteries contributed the germ that bloomed through religious culture into guilds of stone-cutters towards the close of the Eleventh century. It is indeed true that there were bodies of builders, the precursors of the later operative masons, as early as the time of Charles Martel, in the Eighth century, whose corporate existence antedates this era more than a hundred years, when the Langobardic rulers admitted their legal rights by royal prescript.

Previous to Rothair, a troop of artificers was ordered into the distant province of the Avars, by the king of the Lombards,¹ upon a warrant evidently imitated from the formal decrees used for such purposes in the time of Theodorick the Goth, whereby the most expert stone-cutters were transferred from one part of the Italian empire to another.² With the dis-

¹ Hoc quoque tempore misit Aigulfus rex Cacano regi Avarum artifices, Warnefrid, *Gest. Langobard*, Lib. iv., c. 21.

² Ut secundum brevem subter annexum de Urbe nobis marmorios peritissimos destinatis, qui eximie diviso conjugant, et venis colludentibus illigata naturalem faciem laudibiliter metiantur.—Cassiodor. *Variarum*, Lib. i., Ep. 6.

integration of the Lombard dominion and the ascendancy of the Carlovingians conjointly with the papal hierarchy, all further notice of the early Middle-age builders as a lay society ceases. A new order of social life narrowed their independent condition under Civil Law into the control of that absolute authority, which needed the constructive art for building sacred edifices.

Subsequent to the extinction of the Langobards, by the enlightened policy of the Carlovingians and the Romish Church the entire body of arts and sciences passed to the sole control of the latter power, of which indeed the art of building religious houses was of primary importance. Before the opening of the Eleventh century two distinctive forces divided the administrative powers of the times: the feudal and ecclesiastical. The former element of society was so thoroughly denuded of operatives competent to erect the towers and fortified dwellings necessitated by the age, that recourse was had to the cloisters, where alone such skill was obtainable.

These artisans, strange to relate, were never loaned or contracted out to the seculars unless the priories were indemnified against their skill being applied to constructing anything that might cause death!³ This has a significance which implies absolute dominion of the Church over the mediæval masons.

Down to the time of Charlemagne, it may be stated as a general proposition that nearly all operatives were

³ Von Raumer, *Geschichte der Hohenstauffen*, Th. vi., p. 316, and Otte, *Geschichte der Baukunst.*, p. 290.

bondsmen. So thoroughly was this thought associated with manual labor, that in the time of the Franks a tailor captured in the rising city of Paris only escaped torture by proving himself a freedman.⁴ The *Carpentarii*, otherwise vehicle builders, are graded in ancient municipal law according to their estimated value to owners.⁵ In fact, the social status of such craftsmen was merely that of serfdom; and strange as it may appear, the whole body of operatives invariably attended their lords whithersoever they journeyed, in peace or in war. For such wanderings, enclosed but rude wagons served both the purposes of transportation while abroad, and of domiciles when sojourning within the vast extent of national delimitations at home.⁶ Oftentimes a blushing Gallic bride went to her husband's custody after the betrothal with a shoe,⁷ accompanied by a long perspective of ambulatory artificers, who composed a royal or princely dower.⁸

Laymen in conveying real property to monasteries specifically set forth in the solemn acts of transfer bondmen and women, who ever thereafter became the goods of the religious houses, and devoted their craft to the support of their new owners. From the very

⁴Quod talis esset artifex, Refuga es tu dominorum, nec tibi licebit ultra diversa vagari.—Gregor. Turnon., *De Miraculis S. Martini*, Lib. ii., c. 58.

⁵Lex Salica, c. 31, and Baluz, *Capitula*, De Villis, c. 45.

⁶Familias multas de domibus fiscalibus auferri præcipit et in plaustris componi.—Greg. Turn., *Histor. Franc.*, Lib. vi., c. 45, Valesius *Rer. Francor.*, Lib. xi., ap. loc. cit.

⁷Gregor. Turnon, *Vitæ Patrum*, Cap. 16, §1.

⁸Ibid, *Hist. Franc.*, Lib. vi., c. 45.

earliest ages, they were separated into groups or *scholæ* of trades, and lived thus aggregated on the streets set apart for them in the towns and villages.⁹ This custom remained in steadfast vigor down to the very close of the Fifteenth century, when guilds of masons had their domiciles together in Paris.¹⁰ For the most part, filiates of mechanical occupations controlled by the cloisters resided adjacent thereto, in the towns appurtenant to their ecclesiastical proprietors. Here the conventual functionaries visited them and collected what was due.¹¹ Without the assent of his master no serf could be accepted an inmate of a monastery. Frequently the free-born surrendered into church servitude, and with their issue became bondmen.¹² In the time of Otho the Great, in this way the abbeys obtained many mancipia.¹³ Civil law, sanctioned by sacerdotal synods, laid an interdict upon the children of these serfs becoming inducted into orders.¹⁴ These citations attest that the *conversi* arose from a social grade more elevated than ordinary conventual workmen, because these last were almost uniformly in bond-

⁹ In a plan of the city of Vienna, dating back to the close of the XIth century, cited by Otte, *Geschichte der Baukunst*, Zweite, Abs. p. 251 seq., such streets as the following occur: *Strata Aurifaborum*; *Inter Arcatores*; *Semita Sutorum*; *Semita Tunnariorum*, etc.

¹⁰ Legrand D'Aussy, *Historie de la vie Privée des Français*, Tom. i., p. 358.

¹¹ *Constitutiones Hirsaug*, Lib. ii., c. 46.

¹² Heineccius, *Antiq. German.*, Tom. ii., p. 407.

¹³ *Ibid* op. cit., p. 409.

¹⁴ *Heinrici Leges*, cc. 3 and 4, and Heineccii, *Antiq. Germ.*, Tom. ii., pp. 477, 511.

age, while the former, afterwards the best builders of mediæval Europe, originated from the free-born. In order to provide against successful escape of fugitive mancipia, who were to be instantly returned to their proper domains,¹⁵ persons at liberty to travel were required by the Decretals to carry with them a warrant of freedom—*carta libertatis*¹⁶ or letters of safe conduct, the possession of which was, in the times under consideration of the highest value.¹⁷

Whatever may have been the condition of the body of constructors under Christian rule, in the cities of Gaul or France, as late as the Fifth century, doubtless such municipalities as Triers, whose semi-paganized populace clamored for the rebuilding of the circine edifices destroyed by the Franks,¹⁸ must have possessed enough of operative skill to transmit rules of this art to their successors, the priories. Through the rapid extension of the Gothic element in the provinces of France, Church authority quickly advanced to commensurate puissance. By the preservative forces of secular legislation emanating from Merowings and Carovingians, the monasteries of the Western Empire not only became sanctuaries into which all other arts fled for refuge, but were the first to absorb con-

¹⁵ Si qua mancipia servitium declinantia, * * sine aliqua dubietate restitui.—Cassiodor, *Variarum*, Lib. iii., cap. 431.

¹⁶ Gratianus, *Decretum*, P. iii., D. v., c. 35.

¹⁷ *Edictum Rachis Regis*, Capit., in *Brevi. c. i.*—Nullus homo sine signo aut epistola regis exire possit.—*Lex Salica Emendata*, cap. vi.; and Ziegelbauer, *Hist. Lit. Rei Benedictor*, Tom. i., p. 517, for such decree issued by Pope Paul IV.

¹⁸ Salviani, *De Gubernat. Dei*, Lib. vi. c. 15.

structive talent stranded throughout Southern Europe.¹⁹ Otherwise whatever knowledge of practical utility these builders might be possessed of, without the fostering care and culture imparted to them by the only element of society that required their skill, must have subsided to the level of other mechanical trades, whose revival was delayed until more modern times. Moreover, mediæval architecture is confessedly alone of all the sciences, which at an early period attained its highest perfection; and hence the induction that this honored excellence of handiwork, thus quickly seized by the Church, was developed within the cloisters by men of high intellectual force and great zeal, as will it is hoped be clearly revealed in the ensuing pages of this treatise.

The vast numbers of priories subordinate²⁰ to a single illustrious monastery—in some cases, for example that of Clugny, reaching to thousands—compelled the maintenance of enormous bodies of builders. Added to this fact that unnumbered towns or municipalities grew out of these convents,²¹ who erected and in many instances owned the houses of their inhabitants,²² and at once the necessity of having great troops of operatives always at hand becomes further apparent.

¹⁹ The learned minister of Theodorick, in treating on the necessary instruction to convent inmates, called their attention specifically to the uses of mathematics.—Cassiodor, *De Artib. et Discipl. Liber. Litter. Præfatio et cap. 3.*

²⁰ *De Nouveaux Monastères, et ils se multiplièrent que cinquante ans après (A. D. 1163), il y avait cinq cents abbayes dépendantes de Cîteaux.*—*Cursus Patrolog.* Tom. clxxxviii. p. 1278.

²¹ Montalembert, *Les Moines d'Occident*, Tom. 1., pp. 69–75.

²² *Gesta Abbatum Trudonensis*, Lib. xiii. c. 3.

Previous to the Twelfth century, the question arises where these artificers were lodged. To this the answer can be made with reasonable accuracy, that at the period noted they lived and had sustentation in the monasteries, together with "lodges" or work-shops; and as late as the year 1488, the cathedral authorities of Durham contracted with one Johannes, a mason, for life abode and support, for which he was to have control of the repairs on that edifice.²³ In the Ninth century the celebrated abbey of Saint Gall planned a separate apartment in its new building for the general master of constructive operations.²⁴ Under him was placed each Decanus operis, who in turn had charge of ten craftsmen.²⁵ This latter functionary nearly corresponds to the mediæval Palirer, or warden, as coming into immediate contact with craft government, as well as living within the convent. Through him the monastic superior ruled that class of operatives to whose workmanship was entrusted the actual labor of constructing edifices during the Middle Ages.²⁶ The Grand Master of the operatives as early as the Fifth century was an officer clearly recognized by royal rescript, entitled to precedence at Court when properly arrayed with his gilded staff of office.²⁷

²³ Tres Histor. Dunhelemensis, Appendix. p. 373, Ed. Surtees.

²⁴ Springer, Geschichte der Baukunst, p. 58, and Otte, Geschichte der Baukunst, p. 103.

²⁵ Du Cange, Glossator. Med. et Infim. Latinitat, sub voce Decanus.

²⁶ Vide Ekkehard, jun., De Casibus S. Galli, c. 3; Conrad Faber, De Cas. Monast. S. Galli, c. 4; and Constitutiones Hirsaugen, Lib. i, c. 90, touching this office and its duties.

²⁷ Ut aurea virga decoratus, inter obsequia numerosa, ante pedes regios primus videaris incedere.—Cassiod. Variar, Lib. vii., c. 5.

In his title of mastership is to be found nearly the equivalent used in addressing that functionary in modern times—*Magisterium * * * Spectabilem*.²⁸

The inquiry is now pertinent who these conventual artificers were, how recruited, their general government, etc. One of the stone-cutters' legends cited by Berlepsch²⁹ asserts that the Masons took their origin at Magdeburg under Charles the Second, in the year 876. In this king's name there is an identity with the British craft chronicles.³⁰ But the French craftsmen traced their rise to Charles Martel, a hundred and fifty years earlier.³¹ So far as the Teutonic myth is concerned, it may possibly contain an element of truth; because some recognition of their services may have been rendered for constructing defensive works against the Norsemen, to whose destructive invasions this territory was particularly exposed. Moreover, at the epoch designated a change took place in the internal polity of the cloisters, which unequivocally provided the way for a transmission of building art through conventual operatives to their confreres in the mediæval guilds.

In the year 851 the abbey of Corbey, one of the most illustrious of mediæval monasteries, opened the portals of their great establishment for the reception, culture in art and morals, of a class of freeborn lay-

²⁸ Ibid. It was made a part of his duty to study such writings as would advance the preëminence of later art: *ut ab opere veterum sola distat novitas fabricarum*.—Ibid.

²⁹ *Chronik der Maurer*, Th. 8, pp. 132, 164.

³⁰ Cooke MS. 23, 198, says Charles II.

³¹ Fort, *The Early History and Antiquities of Freemasonry*, p. 282 seq.

men's sons, equally denominated *conversi*, and at a somewhat later date, *barbati fratres*.³² These persons partially shared the clerical costume, and although receiving sustentation in the religious houses, were connected with them solely by a semi-ritualistic obligation. Sometimes they were known as lay brothers.³³ Greater liberty of personal movement was accorded them in going to and from the convent.³⁴ From the very date of their entrance into and becoming an integral part of the monastic system, they appear to have been specially trained and cultured as a body of skilled constructors. *Scholæ* or guilds³⁵ of such operatives properly classified lodged within the convents; and not unfrequently, when more recent styles of architecture or other cognate arts were required, particularly in Italy, for constructing and decorating, famed Byzantine and Alexandrian masters were called to the priory lodges or workshops, in order to conduct the artistic education of the youthful *conversi*.³⁶

³² *Bosio conversus S. Vitio omnia tradidit, Annales Antiqui Corbeie Saxonice, sub an. 851.*

³³ *Freidr. von Raumer, Geschichte der Hohenstauffen, Th. vi., p. 301.*

³⁴ *Constitutiones Hirsaug., Lib. i., cap. 68. Quos manere in pristino habitu sacra constitutione permisit, Trithemius, Chronicon Hirsaug., pag. 229.*

³⁵ The word *scholæ* is frequently used in these times in the sense given it in the text.—*Du Cange, Glossator, sub voce scholæ.* A schola or guild of Greeks in Rome in the Ninth century.—*Annals Francor, Fuldenses, ap. an. 895.* *Hochfelden, Geschichte Miletär-Architectur, p. 168, conjectures "that the craft scholæ or guilds of the earlier ages disappeared in the preceding age."*

³⁶ In the Monte Cassino rolls, these apprentices are designated "*pueros*:" *Legatos Constantinopolim ad locandos artifices, etc., de mon-*

In traversing the two centuries' prior to the Twelfth, in all directions, these monastic artisans were apparently the principal skilled labor employed on the vast cathedrals of Europe. Whatever the cause that created it, ere the existence of the guilds of builders had become a general element in civil society, the *scholæ* of dextrous *Barbati Fratres* had incurred the anger of their coreligionists.³⁷ Their haughty deportment, sumptuous garb, arrogated right of personal movement, and refusal to submit their bearded faces to the conventual barber,³⁸ subjected them to an impassioned diatribe by a rhymist of the Eleventh century. According to this metrical satire or lamentation they obtained their name from wearing immense unshorn beards—hence *barbati fratres*—which was bestowed on them by the rabble in whose eyes the hirsute appendage, falling to the girdle, made them resemble goats, or the tragic masks of contemporary actors. But among people of some social consequence these *fratres* attained to high favor, which fact it was charged maintained them in their haughty austerity. The ancient versifier admits so far as the canons prescribed a tonsure they conformed only to shaving the crown of the head, and clipped their hair most cautiously after a somewhat comely mode of their own. Enor-

asterii pueris erudiri.—*Chronicon Casiense*, Lib. iii., c. 27. In 1066 the abbot of this convent called thither famed Lombard constructors: *Protinus peritissimis artificibus Amalfitanis quam et Lombardis*, *op. cit.* cap. 26; and *Gesta Desiderii abbat.*, *ap. an. cit.*—a most important attestation of the distinction of a locality enduring for centuries!

³⁷ *Chronicon Lareshamense*, *ap. an. 1090.*

³⁸ *Concilium Avenionense*, cap. 49.

mous, perhaps the pointed shoes worn by seculars, together with wide and flowing breeches completed the dress of these fratres.³⁹ Wherever indeed one of the body of operatives rises into notice through the cloister records, he appears to have revealed the sensitive pride of his fellows, so carefully distinguished as their peculiar characteristic by the poem just cited.⁴⁰

At a later period of the Middle Ages these privileged builders reached the culmination of their asserted claims to freedom, and in maintaining them arrayed their entire body against the authorities of both church and civil government. Before the thirteenth century, the fratres barbati were still content to show respect for the laws of monastic life, with which they were so closely blended and within whose walls they resided.⁴¹ Oftentimes these Masons were actually domiciled in the towns adjacent to the convents, and although thus living external to cloistered walls and receiving pay or sustenance for their handiwork, rigidly insisted upon belonging to the religious houses as their chiefs and masters.⁴² Thus the conversi or barbati fratres submitted to the shadow of an authority, gradually diminishing, though still accorded. Meanwhile these

³⁹ Quos risus populi dedit hoc agnomine fungi

Sunt quia prolaxis barbis ad pectora pexis,

Deformes, hirti, revera moribus hirci

Barbis hircorum similes larvis tragicorum.

—Chronicon Laureshamense ap. an. 1090, Ed. Freher, Tom. i, p. 140.

⁴⁰ Ascivit quendam, famosam lapicidam, Gesta Abbat. S. Trudonis, contin. iii., P. 2, § 2.

⁴¹ Von Raumer, Geschichte der Hohenstauffen. Th. vi., p. 257.

⁴² Ibid.

haughty craftsmen came into conflict with the prelatial functionaries on a point of governance alleged to be an important element in conventual discipline. In a word, the guild of constructors wanted to continue the growth and cultivation of their beards. This was insufferable by the regulations sanctioned by the hierarchy,⁴³ on several grounds, the principal of which was the sharp distinction that a clean shaved face made between the world and professed devotées.⁴⁴ It was urged against the Bearded Brothers, that this very hirsute covering for the face signalized the pomp, and was associated with the splendid dissipations, of secular society. Rulers of civil government and the high placed, traced their lineage to the Merowings, whose proud bearing was closely intertwined with this hairy growth; and at the period specially noted the most signal act of self-sacrifice and consecration to particular purposes, was consummated by cutting off the beard.⁴⁵ I have thus elaborated, perhaps unnecessarily, this curious relation to society, both lay and ecclesiastical, involved in the beard, in order to throw out in relief the remarkable tendencies of the *barbati fratres* towards the more fascinating attractions of civil life throughout the Eleventh and consecutively to the middle of the Thirteenth century. At this last

⁴³ *Consuetudines Clugniac.* Lib. iii., c. 16, *De Rasura Fratrum et Constitutiones Hirsaugenses*; Lib. i., c. 36.

⁴⁴ In general, shaving the beard was a sign of shame and ignominy.—*Heinecc. Antiq. Germ.*, Tom. iii., p. 513.

⁴⁵ *Dithmar., Merseb. Chronicon.*, Lib. vii., p. 200; *Walaf. Strab., De Vita, S. Galli*, c. 2, and *Eginhard, Vita Karoli Magni*, cap. 1.

epoch, the slender threads still remaining of Monastic discipline, were more formal than authoritative.

In the year 1230, William Abbott, of Premontre, attempted to enforce compliance with the rule of the Clugniac order of Monasteries, upon the bearded builders and ordered them to shave off their beards.⁴⁶ The vast sense of conscious power, the great strength of personal independence and inflexible will of these mediæval Freemasons may be inferred from what followed. Instead of proceeding to complete the sacrifice of their hirsute embellishment, with cringing humility and servile fear, these worthy ancestors of the modern craft deliberately refused.⁴⁷ This refusal implies far more than the preceding moral attributes enumerated. It presupposes boundless courage to confront a power in the full swing of its dominion, rendered doubly embittered against defection from prelatial regulations, through vengeance meted out with an unstinted hand to the vanquished heresies of southern Europe. Vigorous manhood had long since been reached by these defiant barbati constructors, as attested by the offending affluence of beards, and therefore they possessed physical endurance for the singular tournament, but their diversified and widespread brotherhood supplied numbers almost equal to those of the Monks themselves. Such answer as they returned to the venerable prelate is also characteristic of the mediæval Masons. They said if the execution of this order were pressed

⁴⁶ Le Paige, *Bibliotheca Præmonstraensis Ordinis*, pp. 825 ; Ed. Paris, 1633.

⁴⁷ Le Paige, *Bibliotheca Præmonstraensis Ordinis*, pp. 825, 925.

against them "they would fire every cloister and cathedral in the country!"⁴⁸ The decretal was withdrawn. Had this strange body been one of the ordinary craft guilds, it would have tasted the grinding force of church subjection by the fearful powers that daunted the spirits and agonized the flesh of recalcitrant heretics of the age. What renders the complete immunity of these builders the more remarkable, is the singular fact that at the same epoch, in the year 1220,⁴⁹ and not far remote in Brunswick, twelve masters of as many guilds were publicly hung, but for what crime the contemporary records fail to disclose.

An inquiry arises here as to what ordinances of a more acceptable nature these Masons, or as they are repeatedly referred to in the convent rolls, Mactiones, Maciones, Marciones⁵⁰ were subjected in their earlier days of discipline. Blended with the active energy of their building talent, necessarily the Barbatī Fratres, as denizens of the cloisters, manifested the essential spirit of fraternity. Of this the name itself must ever stand as an unassailable impediment to perverse induction. Within the sacred enclosures of their *ateliers* or work-

⁴⁸ Le Paige, op. cit., p. 925.

⁴⁹ In eodem tempore decem Magistri Gildonum suspensi sunt, fuit hoc initium multorum malorum.—Gobel. Pers. Cosmodrom, L. vi., c. 67.

⁵⁰ Gould's theory, History of Freemasonry, Vol., p. 109, that the word "mason" comes from "measuring," an English term, is effectually disproved by the existence of the same as stated in the text so early as the Sixth century. Aurelianus Ep. of Arles Regula ad Virgines, cap. 15, and Regula ad Monachos, c. 19, A. D., 545. See Appendix. Odonis Clugniac, De Vita Comit. Aurel., Lib. ii. c. 15, a Clugny writer uses this word as of the year 850.+

shops, monastic operatives were addressed as "Brother." Thus in the ordinance of an abbey at Sempringham, the furriers and tanners of the monastery are particularized as "Brother Furriers," etc.⁵¹ The sequence of this quotation may be drawn to an irresistible conclusion that the *Barbati Fratres* were also denominated, inside the priories and without, as *Fratres Maciones*, or Brother Masons. At the close of the Fourteenth century these words by common usage reappear as "*Fremaceons*."⁵² Later on by ignorant pronunciation a part of this name is made to signify a "Free man,"⁵³ which in a Masonic connection stands wholly without meaning, and should be dismissed as a specimen of inexact philology corrupted into its cited form by the irrational understanding of centuries ago. As hitherto stated, while thus domesticated inside the abbeys, they were classified into *scholæ* or guilds, which at the time were certainly not welded more closely together by other oaths than those professed in the vows of a Monk. By the blows of a hammer the *fratres* were congregated for work,⁵⁴ and in the same symbol of a grasped mallet was imbedded episcopal authority in consecrating hallowed relics.⁵⁵ On the signal, sounded by the religious

⁵¹ *Fratres Pelliparii*, *Statuta Ordinis de Sempringh.* apud *Monasticon Anglicon*, Tom. ii. p. 715.

⁵² Rymer, *Foedera*, Tom. xvii., Syllab. p. 55.

⁵³ Gould, *History of Free-Masonry*, vol. ii. p. 407; and Lyon, *History of Mary Lodge*, pp. 79, 109.

⁵⁴ *Consuetud. Clugniac*, Lib. i., c. 30: *sed percussa tabula*. The ordinance of Lanfranc in the same age directs: *Et super tabulam abbatibus ponantur tabulæ cum malleolis*.—*Decreta Ord. Bened.* § 4.

⁵⁵ *Annalista Saxo*, sub anno, 1019.

functionary, in harmony with a more significant symbolism, the east was faced by the craft, preliminary to regular assignment of labor under the Decan operis.⁵⁶ Similar orientation was prescribed by Monastic rules in the solemn rites of burial.⁵⁷ Marshaling the craft for actual work outside the atelier or conventual lodge, was proceeded with in silent procession, only broken by the colloquial responses laid down for this service, headed by the youngest apprentices or filiates in the schola or guild. After these came the seniors and the dean or warden of ten operatives.⁵⁸ After the usual orisons were sung and prayers or adoration, they were set to work under the authority of the Decan operis.⁵⁹ While at labor the strictest silence, precisely as though within the priory, was enjoined and maintained unless, on asking, permission to speak were granted by the dean or warden. Although absent from the monastery, its rigid discipline was still laid upon them for obedience; and it was only after returning in the order of proceeding as at the commencement with prayer and short address, that license of speech was freely accorded.⁶⁰ Notwithstanding the

⁵⁶ Cum ventum fuerit ad locum operandi, versi omnes ad Orientem per ordinem consistunt.—Udal.Clug. Consuetudines, Lib. i., c. 30.

⁵⁷ Ibid. Lib. iii., c. 29.

⁵⁸ Udal. Clug. Consuetud., Lib. i., c. 30, and Constitut. Hirsaug, Lib. i., c. 22.

⁵⁹ Du Cange, Glossator, sub. v., Decan operis, and Ekkehard, jun., De Casibus S. Galli, c. 3.

⁶⁰ Sequitur *Kyrie Eleison* cum familiaribus appendiciis *Adjutorium Nostrum*. Et tacto ante et retro dicunt *Benedicite*, et sic datur licentia loquendi.—Constitutiones Hirsaug. Lib. ii., c. 48. Von Raumer, Geschichte der Hohenstauffen, Th. vi., p. 257, notes the enforcement of this rule of silence among the operatives.

panegyrist of Abbott William, of Hirsau, distinctly alleges that the celebrated prelate, in order the better to utilize the labors of the conversi in the priory and its vast dependencies, drew up what he terms "cloistral discipline,"⁶¹ for the regulation of the Brothers, I believe this ordinance to be the cited digest of the written laws, imported from their predecessors at Clugny.⁶²

The question of great import that now confronts us, and one of as weighty value as any preceding, is who constituted the structural elements of the early and later mediæval societies of German Steinmetzen, Tailleur de peere, of France,⁶³ and the Tagliapetra of Italy.⁶⁴ Each of the three terms is applicable to the builders of the Middle Ages, and hitherto the signification thereof to mean "stone cutter"⁶⁵ has never been seriously disturbed. From the Italian tagliapetra a numerous family of rank and wealth originated—one indeed, in the period being traversed, of great honor⁶⁶ and corresponding in its higher sense to that of Freemason in modern times.

Berlepsch⁶⁷ gives it as the result of his investigations among the charters and traditions of the varied

⁶¹ Primus instituit * * Laicorum conversorum * * * eorum claustralem disciplinam.—*Vita Beati Wilhelmi Abbatis*, cap. 23.

⁶² *Constitutiones Hirsaugen*, Lib. i., prolog.

⁶³ Fort, *The Early History and Antiquities of Freemasonry*, Ap. C., p. 479.

⁶⁴ Mothes, *Geschichte der Baukunst Venedigs*, Th. i., pp. 186–7.

⁶⁵ *Ibid*, op. cit., p. 186.

⁶⁶ Bluntschli, *Staats und Rechts Geschichte Zurich*, p. 156, and Stow, *survey of London*, Vol. ii., p. 215.

⁶⁷ *Chronik der Maurer*, Th. viii., p. 131.

trades unions, touching which his excellent series of records are professedly compiled, that the guild of Masons⁶⁸ was the earliest organized. This statement is by no means free from suspicion, although if accepted as a fact, it accords with the line of inquisition, I now propose to follow, viz.: that contemporaneously with the creation of cloister regulations in the Ninth century, organizing the *conversi* or *barbati fratres*, the guilds or fraternities of Masons sprung into existence. In other words the stone-cutters, as *barbati fratres* residing within the Monasteries, or as *Steinmetzen*, etc., domiciled without, were the same body of constructors, and that long after the Bearded Brother Masons had ceased to live uniformly under the conventual roof in many localities, as shown in the foregoing pages, they yet retained the popular nomenclature of *Barbati Fratres*, and were classified as monastic operatives.

Divested of their oath-bound character, no doubt guilds were admitted not only in the towns but in early mediæval convents, as an elemental principle of classifying artisans of high or low degree. So vigorous, indeed, was the robust strength of this social form of union that the clergy appear to have not merely patronized them, but joined them with such eager good fellowship as to provoke the repressive power of prelatial interdict. A decretal in the year 528, issued

⁶⁸ The word "mason," I am now satisfied, is derived from the "*macina*" or trestle used by the wall builders in high elevations, *Vide Annotat. De Merced., Mag. Comac., Appendix xi., c. 2.* The *Glossarium Cavense*, sub. voce "*Maccinam*" says it means "*pontonem*," as interpreted above.

“against those consecrated to the Church connecting themselves with guildic organizations, as was admittedly the custom of laymen.”⁶⁹ Three centuries more recent, in an archiepiscopal conventicle at Rheims, an allocution was delivered to the presbyters, directing their attention to the existence of societies or guilds, but adverting to them in no malevolent sense.⁷⁰ Athelstane, as early as the year 928, not only recognized this social feature under Anglo-Saxon rule, as an essential element, but raised the guilds to legal privileges by means of a general statute, sanctioned by the Church authorities in the city of London.⁷¹ No doubt this legislation was in itself of sufficient importance to merit kindly remembrance by those craftsmen thus admitted to filiation into fraternities placed under the protection of law. Perhaps this single fact may assist in substantiating the Masonic lineage, ascending by tradition to “Athelstane’s day.” The grandeur, number and magnificence of the edifices wherewith this royal personage embellished the Monasteries of his realm, assumes the existence of vast troops of Masons, whose guildic union, under prelatial authority, the preceding citation plainly

⁶⁹ Nullam conjurationem, nullam conventiculum, quod vel apud laicos non potest impunitum in Ecclesia Dei, nullus facere tentet ex clero.—Felicis papæ, Decretum, I.

⁷⁰ De collectis quas Geldonias vel confratreias, vulgo vocant.—Hincmar, Ad Presbyter, cap. 16.

⁷¹ Et diximus etiam omnibus illis qui in nostram gildscyram [sodalitium] vadium dederunt, si contingat eum [*lege* unum] mori, omnis congildo det unum panem et companagium pro anima ejus.—Leg. Eccles., Athelstani Regis, cap. 13, § 9.

implies.⁷² Eight years afterwards, A. D. 936, the splendors of York are significantly noted by one of the Northern Sagas in narrating the prowess of a Norse hero.⁷³

Towards the termination of the Eleventh century, the founder of the order of Grandmonts specifically barred any of the filiates from joining or organizing these societies that so largely resembled the drinking guilds recounted with such attractive simplicity by the ancient romancers.⁷⁴ This ordinance enjoining the Grandmont devotees⁷⁵ is almost contemporaneous with the general impulse of that age to enlarge these unions into protective societies of different handicrafts, drawn more closely together by oath-bound obligations. This last element of the assemblies appears to have provoked stringent rescripts by the Emperor of Germany, in the year 927.⁷⁶

Ecclesiastical permission, in its earlier stages, doubtless fostered the propensity of Monastic inmates to unite with very ancient guilds, by means of accepted formularies of conventual brotherhood. For example, each eminent abbey maintained what was termed an "indculus" of fraternity, in which were enrolled its

⁷² In sua tempore in tota Anglia vix unum erat monasterium quod ornamentis, ædificiis et prædiis non dotaverit. Herman, Corner. Chronicon, sub anno, 932.

⁷³ A Jörnu-Saegi: In Eboraci splendorem, Eigil Saga, cap. xliii., Str. 19.

⁷⁴ Ibid, cap. 7.

⁷⁵ Du Cange, Glossator., Tom. i., col. 1284.

⁷⁶ Annalista Saxo, sub an, 927.

members, though actual strangers to the religious body itself and affiliated with a distant Monastery.⁷⁷ Notwithstanding the polemical utterances of a venerable controversialist who combined with his polished vehemence the far greater merit of martyrdom, that "all men are brothers,"⁷⁸ in its loftier morality this sentiment was only partially understood and admitted even in the structure of the indiculus mentioned. It may be postulated as incontestable that clerical example of associating in secular *scholæ* or guilds, although in defiance of synodal interdicts and enforcement of the Canons, was readily followed by the *barbati fratres* organizing themselves as partial elements of cognate bodies—far more likely, indeed, since these eminent craftsmen were under less restraint in their social proclivities than the fully consecrated *confrères*, for the customs of Clugny and Hirsau gave unto them entire conventual privileges, and tolerated greater liberty of personal movement.⁷⁹ While, forsooth, the larger part of mediæval society, even its martial Templars,⁸⁰ moved swiftly on to guildic unions as with the monks, it cannot be denied that the high independence and haughty personnel of the *barbati*, both by example of

⁷⁷ Chron. Hildesham, sub. fin., cap. 48.

⁷⁸ Justin Martyr, Dialog., cap. 134.

⁷⁹ Quæ in medio sæculorum peragenda videbantur. Trithemius, Chronicon, Hirsau, p. 229. Also, Constitutiones Hirsau. Lib. i., c. 78.

⁸⁰ In a donation to these in the year 1152, they are designated in the deed as "*Fratres Templi Solomonis*," or Brothers of Solomon's Temple.—*Récherches sur les Anciens Comtes de Beaumont-sur Oise*, Tom. iv., pp. 92-4.

their monachic brethren and by the fascinating attractions of intimate friendship, quickly assumed this form of combination, as yet, perhaps, divested of the mystic coalescence of an oath-bound obligation.

So far as the elemental structure of these ancient guilds is known, evidently their frame-work, as seen in the mediæval societies sworn to secrecy, emanated from clearly recognized portions of Teutonic civilization, existing vigorously contemporaneously with Gothic dominion in Italy, and shot forth from its northern home. From this source much of later craft or lodge governance has been perpetuated, and has survived to modern Free-masonry. In the smooth movement of guildic ceremonials and symbolic allusions, doubtless, the *barbati fratres* imitated innumerable details directly drawn from Monastic discipline. Signs of recognition pervaded the complex system of the convents,⁸¹ and were necessarily evolved from the rigid adherence to enforced silence.⁸² Each grade of functionaries was specifically signaled by prescribed corporeal references;⁸³ but the one of greater significance in its bearing upon the subject-matter of this treatise "was emblematic of constructing a wall," and was used as a token to designate the master of masons in the abbey. This sign was made by the closed hands being placed

⁸¹ *Consuetudines Clugniacenses*, Lib. ii., cap. 4. "De Signis Loquendi." Compare Du Cange, Gloss., sub v., *signum*.

⁸² *Consuetud. Cluniac*, Lib. ii., c. 3. "De Silentio," and *Constitut. Hirsaug.*, Lib. i., c. 6.

⁸³ Further, *Constitut. Hirsaug.*, Lib. i., cc. 6-25.

one over the other.⁸⁴ The development of a system of signs whereby wandering operatives might be known to each other, in the ages under consideration, had a higher utility than the circumscribed limits of a monastic edifice, where it *cannot* be presumed the inmates readily recognized one another. Within the comparatively peopled towns contiguous to their abodes, the adaptation of such a code by which affiliates of traveling guilds might be received as possessing common interests, would alone have rendered some system of the kind hinted at as of great value. The prerogative of wandering in quest of work, or traveling to and from distant points throughout Europe, was narrowed with exclusive vigilance to bodies whose constructive talent was summoned hither and thither as their patrons demanded. How vast was the range of these artistic journeys may be inferred from the fact that French artificers in the 13th century were of such appreciated utility that they were detained as captives in Tartary.⁸⁵

With highways and roadsides barely traversable and exposed to the depredations of unpolished robbers, contingents of operatives necessarily had recourse to the universal right of the guilds, and armed themselves for probable skirmishes.⁸⁶ Coin seldom satis-

⁸⁴ Pro signo magistro cementariorum, pugnum super pugnum pone vicissim, quasi similes construentes murum. Constitut. Hirsaug, Lib. i., 3. 22.

⁸⁵ Huc, Histoire du Christianisme dans Thibet, etc., Tom. i., p. 262, and Legrand D'Aussy, Histoire de la vie Privée des Français, Tom. iii., p. 196.

⁸⁶ Bluntschli, Staats und Rechtsgeschichte Zurich, p. 331.

fied the thieving propensities of the outlaw; everything portable down to the *camisa*, which the forest freebooters permitted the illustrious Lanfranc to retain,⁸⁷ passed into their greedy clutches. The querulous lamentation of the chronicler, cited in the preceding pages of this treatise, reveals with clearness the splendor of costume which the *barbati fratres* ordinarily wore. Goods of this texture were specially tempting to highwaymen. It was a natural arrangement that a significant token of inquiry should be thrown through intervening space, to interrogate any approaching troop, and decidedly preferable to the less innocent message of a whistling shaft. In general, the traveling guilds, to prevent surprise while on these long and fatiguing journeys, posted a regular system of guards at nightfall.⁸⁸

Ere extending examination into what elements of constructive knowledge became the property of the builders' unions of the Middle Ages through the assimilation of the Bearded Brothers, it may not be amiss to seek the repository wherein this learning was deposited and jealously watched—the Lodge. In this the guild of Masons appears to have had a three-fold existence: actual labor, business properly appurtenant, and, when wandering, the right of domicile. One of the first acts to be performed at the locality where an edifice was to rise in magnitude and resplendent grandeur, was the erection of a Lodge, usually fabricated at the expense of the patrons who summoned

⁸⁷ Vita Lanfranci, cap. 2.

⁸⁸ Gesta Abbat. S. Trudon., Lib. iii., P. 2, cap. 1.

the craftsmen. This usage continued uninterruptedly down to more modern times. In the year 1433, the ecclesiastical authorities of Durham, as attested by the fiscal rolls of the Cathedral, were required and submitted to build and suitably appoint a lodge for the exclusive occupancy of the builders called thither to conduct certain repairs on that magnificent structure.⁸⁹

Lodges were necessarily built in close proximity to the particular edifice for the work or repairs on which the operatives were engaged. In many cases these guildic halls, though doubtless of primitive design and finish at their remoter origin, maintained an uninterrupted existence throughout great cycles of time. This curious fact is, however, easily explained. When a fabric of vast proportions was planned out for construction, necessity demanded that adequate lodges should be forthwith erected for permanent use of troops of builders whose life labors not unfrequently ended in the slow progress of the work. Oftentimes three or more generations of men wrought on the elegant stone details, and passed away long ere the dedicatory rites showed completion.⁹⁰ Masons' lodges around a large cathedral or monastery were so numerous that they

⁸⁹ *Super factura unius Logæ in cimetario Dunelmensi pro dictis petris operandis, cx., s. iii. d. —. Histor. Dunelm., Scrip. Tres. Ap. p. 443.*

⁹⁰ Occasionally the burial place of an eminent stone cutter was specially marked by the implements of his trade being cut into the stone set up to his memory. In *crypta juxta murum monumentum ponens ad caput ejus trullam ejus et malleum ad posteritatis monumentum.*—*Vita Meinwercke, Ep. Paderb., cap. 17, A. D., 1009.* This wandering—advenam—craftsman announced himself to the bishop as mason and wood-worker: *cœmentarium et carpenterium.*—*Ib.*

presented the appearance of villages, and gave the name to the curtilage or plaza surrounding the edifice. Those that stood in close propinquity to St. Mark's, at Venice, bore the title of Corti delle Tagliapetra, or square of the stone-cutters.⁹¹ As late as the year 1505, many of these lodges were still in use, having had an undiminished existence from the year 979. Their immense numbers, it seems, rendered removal a matter of absolute need, which was carried out by Giorgio Spar, the provost and general, in the first years of the sixteenth century.⁹²

One of the earliest official acts of Theodorick, the King of the Goths, was a decree commanding respect for the Roman code, which insured the right of personal law.⁹³ This provided the lodges a power to govern the filiates, and a jurisdiction also over all matters germane to the interests of the craft.⁹⁴ But a significant is here approached in this connection, in that the guilds had the undisputed prerogative, according to organic law, of uniting to themselves those craftsmen whose workmanship it was desirable to command in the subjunctive branches of artistic culture.⁹⁵ Inas-

⁹¹ Bei jedem Bau wurde dann eine Bauhütte etabliert, welche bestand, so lange der Bau dauerte; daher finden wir noch jetzt bei so vielen Palästen eine *corte del tagliapetra*, daher kennen wir so wenig Architectennamen aus dem Mittel Alter.—Mothes, Gesch. der Baukunst Venedigs, Th. i., p. 217.

⁹² Ibid. Th. ii., p. 53.

⁹³ Gratianus, Decretum, P. I., dist. x., c. 12.

⁹⁴ Bluntschli, Staats und Rechts Geschichte Zurichs, p. 332.

⁹⁵ Lanzi, Storia Pittorica della Italia, Tom. i., p. 29; and Berlepsch, Chronik der Maurer, Th. viii., p. 133, states, what is obvious, that the same plan of community was practiced by the mediæval masons.

much as the use of canvas was rare in the Middle Ages, painters accommodated themselves with triptychs or wooden tablets instead. These in turn were covered with finely-dressed leather. Hence the conjunction of guilds of saddlers and wood carvers at Florence.⁹⁶ This last trade attained high skill, and was justly celebrated for the pride of its members.⁹⁷ So thorough was the blending of these differing guilds, that when towards the close of the period just alluded to they sought to sever their relations, it was only after prolonged litigation at civil law that this disunion was accomplished.⁹⁸ In addition to the mechanical skill of the Masons, the larger and more affluent abbeys required the handicraft of other artificers. Among these, wood carving was indispensable. Therefore the *lignatorii* were often conjoined with their fellow-operatives in decorating structures.⁹⁹ As early as the sixth century the wood carvers were domiciled in the monasteries.¹⁰⁰ In harmony with the frequent unions as ad-

⁹⁶ *Raro uso faceva in quel secolo la pittura di sole tele; le tavole si adoperavano communement. Ed ecco perchè essi a' pittori se unirono in qualche luogiai sellj, etc. Lanzi, Storia della Pittorica della Italia, Tom. i., p. 31.*

⁹⁷ *Ibid. Tom. i., p. 30.*

⁹⁸ *Ne altramente si son divisi da' pittori che a forza di liti e di giudeza,—Ibid, Tom. i., p. 29.*

⁹⁹ *Otte, Geschichte der Baukunst, p. 52; and Tres lignorum opifices qui in artis hujus peritiia ceteris præstantiores.—Ison., De Miraculis, Othm., cap. 9.*

¹⁰⁰ *Montalembert, Les Moines d'Occident, Tom. i., p. 275. The Huns at an early age seem to have excelled in fine wood-work. Jornandes., De Gothor. Rebus Gestis, cap. 34.*

verted to on the basis of mutual profit among kindred guilds, no doubt, the elegant handling of timber for embellishment in a subordinate form, had a certain community with the elaborate handicraft of the Mediæval Masons. If this explanation be unimpeachable, it provides at least a source otherwise inexplicable, from which many of the legends and ceremonies of the ancient craft passed to the Companionship as the base-born handmaid of Masonry.

That intense and earnest zeal, great mental study and rare proficiency in applied mathematics or geometry, are made manifest in the labors of the precursors¹⁰¹ of the modern craft, cannot be denied or called in question. Systematic tuition in the abbeys furnished the *conversi* or *barbati fratres*, the conventual builders, with that thorough mathematical science, which was of the last necessity in the erection of buildings. In a word, the Masons of the Middle Ages must have received their technical education, arithmetical or geometrical, originally from the priories, in order to qualify them for the successful manipulation of the great enterprises entrusted to them. I have previously stated that the lodges or *scholæ*, exemplars of later guilds, bore close relations to the convents, which gave them unusual advantages for the practical acquisition of knowledge at the period under consideration, especially at a time when occasional gleams of the light of

¹⁰¹ Some of these have received honorable distinction at the hands of their contemporaries. Cf. Springer, *Geschichte der Baukunst des Christlichen Mittelalters*, p. 127. "Ingeniosus artifex Rodbertus Bellesmensis."—Order.Vital. *Hist. Eccles.*, P. 3, Lib. x., c. 4, A. D. 1097.

science were struggling upwards beyond the darkness, illumined by the advanced minds who were turning their attention among other things to the application of mathematics to the science of architecture.¹⁰² While the metropolis of the Western Empire still remained under Gothic rule, a mandate equivalent to an imperial rescript issued in the Fifth Century to the Grand Master of public buildings in the City of Rome, directing him to select for service, from the colleges domiciled there, the most skillful operatives. It was further enjoined upon this eminent functionary, that he should familiarize himself with the mechanical principles of Archimides, and by close study master the abstruse mathematics of Euclid.¹⁰³ Translations of this last geometrician¹⁰⁴ were in current use in the city at this era, one of which, by Boethius, was warmly commended by the royal minister.¹⁰⁵ This illustrious sage, the friend of Cassiodorus, appears to have sought in the problems of an arid but estimable science, a moral theory akin to speculative philosophy.¹⁰⁶ In their architectural pursuits a profound acquaintanceship with mathematics

¹⁰² Berlepsch, *Chronik der Maurer*, Theil. viii., p. 102.

¹⁰³ Si frequenter geometram legas Euclidem. Cassiodor., *Variarum*, Lib. vii., c. 5.

¹⁰⁴ Scientists of this profession at the very time were called on to measure the extent of the metropolitan walls. Photius, *Bibliotheca*, p. 198, ed. 1633.

¹⁰⁵ Ex quibus Euclidem translatum in Romanum linguam idem vir magnificus Boetius dedit.—Cassiodor. *De Discipl. Liberal. Artium*, cap. 6.

¹⁰⁶ Boetii, *De Trinitate*, c. 2.

and the calculations of arithmetical science were of the highest necessity to church builders; and from a very early date of the Middle Ages, therefore, such text books as cited were known and appreciated. In Bede's day, himself well versed in this branch of a solid education, Strabo's treatise on mathematical dimensions constituted a portion of the monastic library.¹⁰⁷ Strange to relate, that at a little later date the only version of Euclid obtainable, had been translated from the Arabic tongue into Latin by a European monk named Adelhard.¹⁰⁸ Practical application of the science of geometry as demonstrated in the writings on architecture by Vegetius and Vitruvius, was fully understood and freely made by Raban Maurus, the most polished scholar of the eighth century.¹⁰⁹ Concurrent with the searching study of this science, a tendency continually reveals itself to use its abstruse problems as the basis of philosophical speculation, thus blending the visible theorems with unseen operations of the spirit, resembling somewhat the transfusion of theosophic Masonry into the ancient practical craft. In fact, an English Monk wrote a treatise covering exactly the ground as outlined.¹¹⁰

Building art made its most signal strides simultaneously with the exertions of the much-maligned Ger-

¹⁰⁷ Ziegelbauer, *Histor. Liter. Ordin. Benedict*, Tom. iv., pp. 306-8.

¹⁰⁸ Ziegelbauer, *Histor. Liter. Ord. Benedict*, Tom. iv., pp. 307-8.

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid*, op cit., p. 712. A Monte Cassino dean about the year 1100 prepared a compend of Vitruvius: *Vitruvium de Architectura Mundi abbreviavit*.—*De Viris Ill. Casin.*, cap. 47.

¹¹⁰ Murnith., *Chronicon Continuatio*, p. 180, No. 1, ed. 1846.

bert, otherwise Pope Sylvester II., whose sojourn among the Spanish Arabs in the tenth century afforded him opportunities of obtaining profound knowledge of arithmetical calculations, and transmitting the use of Saracenic figures to the master constructors and the lodges of Europe, mainly in France, but under the weighty protection of Otho the Great, ultimately to Germany.¹¹¹ Of his vast learning in these sciences, and of the profuse skill displayed subsequently by his disciples, contemporaneous and unwilling writers triumphantly attest.¹¹² Even Adelbold avows the unapproachable mathematical erudition of this much abused prelate,¹¹³ and prays his revision of some profound problems submitted to him.¹¹⁴ The great worth of this eminent scientist's services at the epoch treated of, consists in both the adaptation of simpler forms of algebraic equations in calculating imponderable but certain forces of pressure and counter-pressure in the construction of the immense edifices of mediæval Europe, and in rendering the conventual operatives more familiar with the advanced sciences of mechanics and geometry among the Arabs.¹¹⁵

¹¹¹ Berlepsch, *Chronik der Maurer*, Th. viii., p. 102, *en passant*.

¹¹² Order., *Vital. Histor. Ecclesiastic.*, P. I., Lib. i., c. 27.

¹¹³ Adelbold, *De Ratione Inveniendi Crassitud. Sphaerae*, c. 1, makes this humble appeal to Gerbert: *Si erro ad viam a sagacitate vestra reducar; si viam titubans teneo, auctoritate vestri assensus innitar.*

¹¹⁴ *Ibid*, cap. 6, vide Ziegelbauer, *Hist. Lit. Ord. Bened.*, Tom. i., p. 235.

¹¹⁵ Touching the MSS. of Alkindi on scientific instruments, etc., collected at this and later periods, See Bailly, *Hist. de l'Astronomie*, Tom. i., p. 647.

The searching erudition of William, abbot of Hirsau, was manifested in the combination of a piece of mechanism, which for the age, A. D. 1090, may be characterized as little short of marvellous outside the cultivated splendors of Bagdad or the frontiers of Moslem Spain. This wonderful invention was even more elaborate than a sidereal clock, because it was calculated by actual computation to show the equinoxes and the position of the earth in its orbit movements.¹¹⁶ Moreover, this abbot equalled the most proficient and accomplished arithmeticians of the time, and in the cultivation of the Quadrivium, or sterner portion of the seven liberal arts, distanced all competitors.¹¹⁷ But the monastery of Clugny and its dependencies had a further advantage over the eminent abbey of Hirsau and its polished chief, to whom, as hitherto stated, the earliest forms of discipline used by operative builders were transmitted by a Clugniac monk. Early in the century Peter, then superior of Clugny, was found in Spain among Saracenic scholars, accompanied by a private secretary, making a full collection of their learning for the use of his cloister.¹¹⁸ From this, therefore, conclusions may be deduced with unfailing accuracy that the signal acquirements

¹¹⁶ *Vita Wilhelmi Abbatis*, c. 1. This same adjustment was recalculated in the year 1326 by an English cleric, and presented as a gift of great excellence to the well-known convent of Saint Alban's.—Bossuet, *Histoire des Mathématiques*, Tom. i., p. 250.

¹¹⁷ *In Quadrivio sane omnibus pene antiquis, videbatur præeminere.*—*Vita Wilhelmi Abbatis*, c. 1. This specific excellence in the seven liberal arts has peculiar weight in tracing Masonic archæology.

¹¹⁸ *Machumetis Saracenorum Bibliandri*, p. 1, et seq.

thus made by direct intercourse of the Clugniacs with the Moslem savans of Spain and the preëminent mathematical culture of William of Hirsau, enabled each prior to provide that kind of knowledge for the army of conventual scholæ or guilds of builders maintained by them, but also afforded the enduring foundation for the unapproachable fame as constructors everywhere conceded to these convents throughout the Middle Ages. On this solid substratum of geometric and computative science, involving intense study to master it, the mediæval lodges of Masons arose superior to contemporary craft guilds.¹¹⁹ One art alone was wholly distinguished and apart from all others, viz: ARCHITECTURE, not merely for the solemn interest blended with it, but for the display of that practical handiwork of unpliable material by skill of hand conjoined with great mental education. No significant culture of intellect was demanded of the remaining Middle-age artificers—rather, like the wood carvers, armorers, locksmiths, and jewellers, the pride of workmanship ascended no higher than trained mus-

¹¹⁹ Freilich genosz die Kunst der Maurer und Steinmetzen mit Recht ein vorzügliches Ansehen in den Städten des Mittelalters * * * dasz Geschlechter sich zuweilen diesem Berufe widmeten und deszhalb ihren stand nicht erniedrigten.—Bluntschli, Staats u. Rechtsgeschichte, Zürich, p. 156. The erudite historian refers to Iaeger, Ulm, p. 567 seq., for a striking confirmation of the statement given as above. At this time apprentices were apparently regarded as the property of lodges: "Swela hütterknecht wil Meister werden."—Bluntschli, op cit., p. 156-7, n. 81. Cf. Berlepsch, Chronik der Maurer, Th. viii., p. 162-3; and Mothes, Geschichte der Bau u. Bilderkunst Venedigs, Th. i., pp. 186-7. The proposition in the text is fully warranted by contemporaneous records.

cles and cleverness of the eye and hand. In many respects mediæval Masons must have been sharply distinct from subordinate guilds; but so closely was their existence interwoven with the organic fabric in the monasteries, or at a later day brought together as previously urged for mutual profit, that doubtless much of the ritual, ceremonies and customs was drawn¹²⁰ from the "honorable"¹²¹ fraternity of stone-cutters.

Rarely indeed were individual plans worked out in the construction of sacred edifices, but appear to have received both the decision and the sanction of a fully assembled lodge, after careful discussion and searching inquiry into mathematical possibilities.¹²² Manuscript volumes of instruction, among other properties of ancient lodges, were kept constantly to hand for the guidance of the members.¹²³ It was no doubt at an early period of the Middle Ages that the typical notion associated with the Solomonian Temple was understood and transmuted into practical use by the guilds of Masons. There were certain types of architecture then in vogue, as established bases of all plans canvassed and decided by the solemn guildic conventicles, professedly imitated after the Jewish edifice,

¹²⁰ Berlepsch, *op. cit.*, Th. viii., p. 163.

¹²¹ *Ibid.*, p. 156.

¹²² Die Pläne nur höchst selten von einem Einzelnen entworfen, vielmehr in der Bruderschaft gemeinsam berathen wurden.—*Mothes, Geschichte der Baukunst Venedigs*, Th. i., pp. 216-7.

¹²³ *Didron, Christian Iconography*, vol. 1., pp. 172-8.

either in whole or in part.¹²⁴ That this was symbolized to delineate the Universe admits of no controversy, because in the time of Cassiodorus, a learned but blind Asiatic monk asserted this idea to the imperial minister, who drafted a plan of it on the pages of a Latin manuscript of the Pandects.¹²⁵ Some centuries later the Venerable Bede alludes to the same drawing, and typifies it in harmony with the explanation of the Oriental scholaist.¹²⁶

I may add here that a curious legend traversed the Middle Ages, the substance of which was that the Apostle James was hurled from the pinnacle of the Temple at Jerusalem, while praying for his assassins.¹²⁷ This tradition, cited from a writer of the Ninth Century, may possibly attach itself to the recent delusive essay to trace Freemasonry to the Companionage, who equally claimed to be the sons of Jacques, and maintained their filiations with Solomon's Temple.¹²⁸ One of the four sons of Amyon was similarly flung over the turret of the Cologne Minster, by the Masons engaged on that

¹²⁴ Fosbroke, *British Monachism*, p. 229.

¹²⁵ *Tabernaculum templumque Domini ad instar coeli fuisse formatum; quæ depicta in pandecte Latino, etc.*—Cassiod. *De Institutione Divinar. Literar.*, cap 5; Peter Diacon, *Liber De Locis Sanctis* also gravely affirms its four entrances were types of the world: *Quator portas habet * * * quæ habent significationem quator portium mundi.* Also, that at the summer solstice the temple threw no shadow. — *Ibid.*

¹²⁶ *Cursus Patrol.*, Tom. xlix., p. 473; and Ziegelbauer, *Hist. Lit. Ord. Bened.*, Tom. iv., p. 59.

¹²⁷ *Jacobus apostolus præcipitatus de Pinnaculo templi.*—*Hincmar, Epistolæ.* iii.

¹²⁸ Gould, *History of Freemasonry*, vol. i., p. 214. This loquacious writer uses the arms of Achilles for destruction only.

stupendous fabric.¹²⁹ It is, perhaps, impossible to disentangle the exact meaning of these violent and summary deaths thus associated in some sinister way with high and unusual places—the Solomonian structure on the one side, and the Thirteenth Century craftsmen of Cologne on the other.

The mediæval guilds of operatives, in tracing their lineage to distant progenitors, merely followed dedicatory customs of widespread repute in very ancient times. Of these, one at least has stood unassailed by the changes of centuries. Craft chronicles both British and German affirm that "Walkane" was their precursor as the earliest Mason.¹³⁰ This is no other than Vulcan, who hammered out the resistless thunder of Jove; but what is of greater value historically considered is the statement of a Patristic writer, that the Roman college of iron workers dedicated their guild to the patronage of this mythical heroic artificer of remote antiquity.¹³¹ In like manner the successors to the mallet and chisel of the Holy Four Crowned Martyrs, either placed the guildic brotherhood directly under their protection, or claimed some important regulations to be sanctioned by them as patrons, who themselves carved the more elegant pilasters for the great edifices of their day.¹³²

¹²⁹ Rabelais, *Opera*, p. 458, Ed. Bibliopole Jacob. This tradition is chronicled in the *Mediæval Romance of the Four Sons of Amyon*.

¹³⁰ Berlepsch, *Chronik der Maurer*, Th. viii., p. 165.

¹³¹ *Vulcano faber ferri consecratur*.—Tertullian, *Ad Nationes*, Lib. i., cap. 10.

¹³² *Cursus Patrolog.*, Tom. xlix., p. 651. Not. 6 by Juretus: *Vetusta historia quator Coronatorum*: "Et coeperunt artifices quadratarii incidere lapidem ad collyrium columnæ."

APPENDIX.

Aureliani Sancti Regula ad Monachos, A. D. 545.
Caput xix.:

“Provisores vero monasterii, si in habitu laico fuerint, nec ipsi permittantur introare ; pro his utilitatibus quas in hac regula statuimus, cum marcionibus (macionibus¹) aut carpentariis, si aliquid necesse est fieri reparari, aut certa aliqua ratione abbati facienda, introeant.”
Cursus Patrolog., Tom. lxxviii., page 390.

Regula ad Virgines. Caput xv.:

“Provisores vero monasterii, si in habitu laico fuerint, nec ipsi permittantur introare, nisi pro his utilitatibus quas in hac Regula statuimus, cum marcionibus (marcionibus¹) aut carpentariis, si aliquid necesse est fieri aut reparari, aut certe pro aliqua ratione abbatissæ introeant.”—Ibid, op. cit., page 401.

¹ Du Cange, Glossatorium, Tom. ii., col. 374.

1. The first part of the document is a list of names and dates.





